

St. Alban the Martyr in Ottawa.

Mr. Pardee—To alter and amend the survey of the lands of Canada Company in the townships of Boanquet and McGillivray.

Mr. Wilson—For the admission of William E. Idzardi as a Provincial Land Surveyor.

Mr. Macdougall—Respecting the North Simcoe Railway Company.

#### WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Mr. CLARKE (Norfolk), in moving the second reading of the Bill to extend the Municipal Franchise to women, said he intended to move in Committee to substitute for the second clause one allowing husbands still to qualify and vote on their wives' property. He did not propose to extend the franchise for Parliamentary elections to women at present, as it was said that the country was not ripe for that extension at present. He referred to officers which had been held by women in the past, and stated that he did not propose to exclude married women from the franchise. It was an injustice to deprive the married sister of the rights granted to the unmarried sister. All sexual laws ought to be expunged from our statute book. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He alluded to the Hungarian laws on this subject, and congratulated the House on the Act passed under the auspices of the Treasurer to extend the rights of married women in regard to property, of which this measure was the necessary sequence. Women had now the right to vote for school trustees, and he only proposed to extend their right to elections of members of the municipal Councils. He quoted at great length the speeches of British statesmen in reference to the question of female suffrage. No one, he said, desired to compel women to vote, but they should have the right to do so if they chose. It was said that this would introduce discord into families, but the heads of all families now differed more or less. (Loud laughter.) Let hon. gentlemen who could throw the first stone. (Laughter.) It was not a scandal, but a necessary result of human nature. (Loud laughter.) It was said that women were naturally Conservative, and he was sure hon. gentlemen opposite would not object to a measure which would infuse strength into their feeble ranks. (Cheers.) Ontario had been selected by Providence and the British Government as the first colony in which to try responsible government, and she was also distinguished for her educational and municipal system. He argued that the Bill should pass, because since the passage of the British Reform Bill taxation and representation were relative and reciprocal terms, and no class ought to be taxed without having a corresponding voice in the selection of the persons who were to tax them. Only six classes were now excluded from the franchise—paupers, lunatics, criminals, minors, idiots, and women. Four of these classes could regain the franchise, but idiots and women were permanently excluded. No class ought to be excluded from the franchise, because exclusion involved the neglect of their interests. Remarks to the effect that he sought to gain notoriety by such measure, or that he stood forth as the champion of advanced women, generally like Woodhull and Claflin, generally came from those who had not the industry to investigate the subject on its merits, and concealed their ignorance by ill-timed sneers. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Mr. MERRICK—I call the attention of the House to the fact that the hon. gentleman is reading his speech. (Laughter.)

Mr. CLARKE said that unlike some hon. members of the Opposition he intended being very accurate in his statements, so accurate that even the hon. member for Leeds would not have an opportunity of misquoting him. (Laughter and cheers.) He referred to Queen Victoria and other English ladies who had distinguished themselves in various walks of life, as examples of women who had not proven to be social failures. If it was unwomanly and irregular for women to vote, then Queen Victoria must be the most irregular and unwomanly of women, for no Bill could become law without her assent. The medical schools and universities, and other educational institutions were open to women, though their higher education was still attended with considerable difficulty; they were allowed to attend the Normal Schools and become teachers; they were punished for crime, and visited with a far greater degree of social vengeance for some violations of morality than the male sex were; yet politically women were regarded as nonentities. This was surely unfair and unstatesmanlike. It seemed to be considered that women's lives and purposes were all of a frivolous

character, but history was full of instances testifying to her loftiness of aim and nobility of purpose. Some of them might be open to the charge of frivolity, but so were too many men. (Hear, hear.) As members of the community, women were as capable of judging of the fitness of things as men were; they were as able to deliberate wisely upon such matters as education, the management of the poor, the treatment of criminals, or the guidance of immigration. In legislation affecting social evils, her counsels would be especially valuable. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. CREIGHTON said he thought his hon. friend from Norfolk had been guilty of a violation of the Copyright Act, as he (Mr. Creighton) had introduced a similar measure, last session. (Laughter.) He would not make any lengthy observations on the matter as he believed the hon. gentleman had gone over the whole ground, and in fact had embraced the whole subject. (Laughter.) The principle once conceded, that representation should go along with taxation, there was nothing could be advanced against conferring the municipal franchise upon women except mere prejudice. It was often said that this suffrage would degrade the female sex, but there was no evidence of any such tendency in the case of voting for School Trustees which was a right now enjoyed by women. In all business avocations ladies had proven themselves as shrewd and as sound in judgment as the male sex. He could not approve of the principle of giving votes to married women. The Women's Disabilities Bill in England only proposed to give the franchise to widows and spinners as he had proposed last session. He believed the principle introduced in the present Bill would kill the measure, and rendered it contrary to the laws of God and nature. For that reason he could not support the Bill.

Mr. DEROJHE said he failed to see what the general eulogy of women had to do with the principle of this Bill. John Bright had stated that this measure assumed an antagonism to exist between the sexes which did not exist. He could not conceive of anything worse which could happen to this country than that the wives and mothers of Canada should be introduced into the turmoil and sometimes the questionable proceedings connected with politics. (Cheers.) If women were allowed to vote they ought consistently to be permitted to be candidates for office. (Hear, hear.) It might happen that the husband would be the candidate on one side and the wife on the other. (Laughter.) The women were not asking for this measure. He was not aware of any petitions being presented to this or any other Legislature by the ladies asking for such legislation. It was a disgrace to the womanhood of this land to say that the women who went round lecturing on temperance were the representative women of Canada. The representative women were those who stayed at home and minded their own business. (Cheers.) Women did not form a class in the sense of minors, paupers or lunatics. There were females in each of these classes. (Hear, hear.) The hon. gentleman had referred to Hungary and Italy, but we very seldom referred to those countries for precedents. He did not think the American women were to be compared with the Canadian women. He did not know of any free lovers in Canada, unless some of the promoters of this measure were advocates of those views. (Laughter.) There was no desire in the country that this Bill should become law. The member for North Grey was grieved that the member for North Norfolk had stolen his thunder. The strong argument against both their measures was that the position of women was well defined, and that our present system had long worked well. He did not believe the introduction of women into politics would diminish drunkenness or elevate the tone of the political world.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he was conscientiously obliged to oppose the Bill, not only from his own standpoint, but on behalf of the ladies. They could not more degrade them than by bringing them into the arena of politics, and thrusting on them this legislation for which they had not asked. Woman was in her true position at the head of her household, ministering to her children. She was there performing a far nobler duty than the House could force on her by driving her to the polls.

Mr. FRASER said he thought the Bill to have been entitled, "A Bill to enable ought women to become ward politicians." That was a position in which he was sure the House did not desire to place them. If women were to have votes for municipal councillors, they ought to have them for